

be described; also to Mr. P. A. Clancey, Director of the Durban Museum and Art Gallery for the loan of comparative material of the nominate form from Natal and of *B.l.kilimense* and *leucogrammicum* from Kenya Colony and Tanganyika Territory.

A New Race of *Francolinus africanus* Stephens from the Drakensberg Mountains of South Africa

by MR. P. A. CLANCEY

Received 17th December, 1956

Sclater, *Ibis*, 1912, 1, p. 40, showed that perhaps three races of the Greywing Francolin *Francolinus africanus* Stephens could be recognized from within South African limits on the basis of the material then in the collection of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London. Apart from the widely distributed nominate form, Sclater proposed to differentiate a "race" from northern Little Namaqualand on the grounds that specimens collected there differed from examples from the Cape Division in having the chins and throats more densely spotted with black. He also differentiated from the Cape birds the populations of the Transvaal and upper Natal, stating: "The birds from Wakkerstroom (on the Transvaal-Natal border) are again quite different-looking from those of the Cape; they are much more ochreous in general tone, and the lower breast and abdomen instead of bearing the white ocellations on black, so characteristic of the true Cape Greywing, are of a pale fulvous irregularly banded with brown. I should certainly be disposed to recognize this form as a distinct subspecies, but the series in the British Museum is very incomplete, while members of this genus are notoriously variable, probably on account of their sedentary habits." Some years later, Mackworth-Praed, *Ibis*, 1922, p. 115, recognized the three racial divisions of South African *F.africanus* proposed by Sclater, *loc.cit.*, designating them as *Francolinus africanus* subssp. 1, 2 and 3.

A study of material of this species recently assembled by the Durban, Natal and East London Museums shows that at least two races of this Francolin can be accorded nomenclatural recognition from within the confines of the South African subcontinent. Material from the highlands of Basutoland and the high interior of Natal at my disposal shows the characters outlined by Sclater over forty years ago. Birds of these eastern highland populations differ from those of the Cape Province in being darker and more strongly marked with dark umber brown on the upperparts, the feathers lacking, or almost lacking, the delicate pearl-grey apices, which are so characteristic of the nominate race. On the ventral surfaces the birds of the eastern highlands are more buffish and finely banded with brown, rather less mottled white and black, than topotypes of *F.a.africanus*. It would seem advisable to accord recognition to these differences by bestowing a name on the populations of this Francolin found in the Drakensberg Mountains and adjacent highlands.

I have seen insufficient material to enable me to arrive at a decision in respect of the differences noted by Sclater for the Namaqualand population, but a single adult ♂ in the collection of the Durban Museum from

Garies collected on 27th October, 1956, does not differ from topotypical examples of the nominate race. As Garies is many miles to the south of Klipfontein, the locality from which Sclater's Little Namaqualand material came, it is very likely that my single example has nothing to do with the Klipfontein population. It does suggest, however, that if there is a discrete race in Little Namaqualand it has a very limited distribution.

In the meantime, I feel that the birds of the Drakensberg Mountains and adjacent highlands should be described as a new race. This would accord with the *Francolinus africanus* subsp. 3 of Mackworth-Praed, 1922. For this race I propose the name

Francolinus africanus proximus, subsp. nov.

Type: ♀, adult. Mountains 30 miles due east of Maseru, Basutoland (29° 28' S., 27° 55' E.). Altitude 8,000 ft. a.s.l. 4th March, 1956. Collected by M. O. E. Baddeley. In the collection of the Durban Museum.

Diagnosis: Differs from *Francolinus africanus africanus* Stephens, 1819: Hottentot country, i.e. Cape Province, South Africa, in being darker and more coarsely marked with umber brown on the upper-parts, the dorsal feathers with little or no grey on the apices. In the nominate race the upper-parts are dappled with light pearl-grey. On the under-parts rather more buffish than the nominate race, the feathers of the breast and abdominal surfaces usually finely banded with umber brown, less mottled black and white. Similar in size.

Paratypical material: The *Type* and 3 paratypes.

Range: The Drakensberg Mountains and adjacent foothills in the eastern Cape Province, Orange Free State, Basutoland, the southern Transvaal, upper Natal and western Swaziland.

Measurements of the Type: Wing (flattened) 152, culmen from base 35, tarsus 38, tail 62.5 mm.

Remarks: I am grateful to the Directors of the East London Museum and the Natal Museum for the loan of comparative material, all of which has been collected during the course of the past five years.

Further on the South African races of the Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus* (Muller)

by MR. P. A. CLANCEY

Received 12th December, 1956

Writing in the *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club*, vol. 75, 5, 1955, pp.63-66, I proposed to recognize two races of the Yellow-fronted Canary as occurring within the confines of the South African sub-continent, these being *S.m.mozambicus* (Müller), 1776: Mozambique, and *S.m.icterus* (Vieillot), 1823: South Africa. In the same paper I expressed doubt as to the discreteness of the putatively paler *S.m.vansoni* Roberts, described in 1932 from Zweizwe Waterhole, northern Bechuanaland, which I placed as a synonym of *S.m.mozambicus*. Since the appearance of my communication on the South African races of this canary in May 1955, Mrs. B. P. Hall has shown on the basis of material collected by her at Panda Matenga, north-eastern Bechuanaland, that *S.m.vansoni* is rather paler than *S.m.mozambicus*, and, while not a well-marked race, it is worthy

of recognition (*vide* "Ostrich," vol. xxvii, 3, 1956, p. 106). It now appears desirable to recognize the three races as listed by Roberts, *Birds of South Africa*, 1940, p. 366, though in the case of the dark austral one, as recognized by Roberts in his book and by the present author in his review of the South African races, *loc. cit.*, the name in current use (*S.m.icterus*) is now found to be untenable and it is necessary to describe a new race.

Captain C. H. B. Grant, *in litt.*, 23rd November, 1956, has kindly drawn my attention to the fact that the names *Fringilla mozambicus* Müller, 1776, and *Fringilla ictera* Vieillot, 1823, are both founded on the same figures (No. 364, figs. 1 and 2) of *Le Serin de Mozambique* in Daubenton's "*Planches enluminées d'histoire naturelle*," 1777, the text of which was written by Buffon. Captain Grant is of the opinion that Müller almost certainly had access to the colour plates of Daubenton's work in advance of its publication, as he (Müller) makes mention of Buffon in his description of *F.mozambica* without giving a precise reference. Resulting from this finding, *F.icterus* must be considered a synonym of *F.mozambica*, which leaves the race of the eastern Cape, Natal and Zululand and adjacent regions without a name. I propose:

Serinus mozambicus granti, new race

Description: Similar to *S.m.mozambicus* (Müller) but darker and greener dorsally, the dark feather centres more fully developed. On the ventral surfaces rather deeper yellow, the sides of the body and the flanks washed with darker olivaceous grey. Similar in size.

Distribution: The southern parts of the eastern Cape Province through Pondoland, East Griqualand and Natal to Zululand and the littoral of the extreme southern parts of Portuguese East Africa.

Type: ♂, adult. Embotyi, Lusikisiki district, Pondoland, eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Sea level. 8th August, 1954. Durban Museum Expedition. In the collection of the Durban Museum. Wing 67.5 mm.

Remarks: Named after Captain C. H. B. Grant in recognition of his valuable work on South African birds.

A Note on *Ortygospiza gabonensis* Lynes

by MR. G. S. COWLES

Received 23rd November, 1956

Specimens presented recently to the British Museum (Natural History) and field notes made in Gaboon by Mr. P. H. M. Vischer provide new information on the plumage characters and habits of the Quail-finch, *Ortygospiza gabonensis*. Nothing seems to have been recorded on this species since Lynes' description (*Bull.B.O.C.*, 1914, 33, p. 131) of the two Gaboon specimens collected by Du Chaillu in the latter half of the last century, and which had been identified in the British Museum collections with the West African *O.atricollis*. Later, *gabonensis* was reunited to *atricollis* as a geographical race, but recently Benson (*Bull.B.O.C.*, 1955, 75, p. 106) has given grounds for believing that the *atricollis* group may consist of two distinct species, or at least behaves as separate species in parts of its range.

The specimens are a male collected on 14th January, 1956, and nearing completion of total moult; another male taken in June; and a female